

Etapa județeană / a sectoarelor municipiului București a olimpiadelor naționale școlare - 2026

Probă scrisă

Limba engleză

CLASA a VIII-a

- Toate subiectele sunt obligatorii.
- Se acordă zece puncte din oficiu.
- Timpul efectiv de lucru este de 2 ore.

SUBIECTUL I – USE OF ENGLISH (25 points)

I.1. Read the following text and fill in the blanks with the correct verb forms.

10 points

By the time Mark _____ **1. (reach)** the age of twenty, he _____ **2. (live)** in four different countries, moving frequently due to his parents' jobs and the opportunities that came with them. He had experienced a variety of cultures, languages, and lifestyles, which made him adaptable and curious. However, nothing _____ **3. (prepare)** him for what he found yesterday, an unexpected discovery that would turn an ordinary day into something extraordinary. While he _____ **4. (clear)** out his grandfather's old attic, carefully sorting through boxes of forgotten belongings, old photographs, and dusty furniture, he stumbled upon a small, intricately carved wooden chest tucked into a corner. It _____ **5. (lock)**, though the metal was rusty with age, but Mark managed to pry it open with a bit of effort and patience. Inside, he found letters that _____ **6. (write)** during the war, yellowed and fragile, each one telling stories of courage, fear, and hope from decades past. If his grandfather _____ **7. (keep)** a diary, Mark _____ **8. (find)** more personal reflections, perhaps revealing private thoughts and secrets that were never shared with the family. He _____ **9. (decide)** to track down the author of the letters, determined to learn the full story behind them and preserve their historical value. He _____ **10. (search)** for clues online since this morning, combing through archives, old records, and social media, hoping to find even the smallest hint, but so far, he has found nothing. The mystery remained, intriguing and elusive, compelling him to continue his quest with growing determination.

I.2. Read the text below and look carefully at each line. If the line is correct, write a tick (✓). If it has a word that should not be there, write the word.

10 points

00.	Let me tell you about my best high school friend. Alex took up every opportunity to	up.....
0.	train as a long-distance runner. He was used to run through the park every morning	was.....
1.	before school. He regularly entered local competitions, the most of which he won.	.....
2.	Even though on cold mornings, he refused to slow down and was always ready	.....
3.	to break a sweat. Soon his efforts have started to pay off. Owing to his self-discipline	.....
4.	and sheer determination, he achieved more prizes rather than anyone else in school.	.....
5.	He became well-known for his cross-country results, and teachers often praised his	.....
6.	highly attitude. Younger students found a role model in him.	.....
7.	Some of his schoolmates asked why did he set such a high standard for himself, since	.....
8.	training was so demanding and others were not happy doing much less. Was he trying	.....
9.	to impress anyone? Alex explained that, for him, running was not only about being	.....
10.	different, but about doing his best while striking up a healthy balance between sport,	.....
	school, and friends.	

I.3. Complete the sentences with the correct form of the words in capital letters.

5 points

1. Mother bear hugged her long-lost cub _____ before they both disappeared into the depths of the dark forest. **LOVE**
2. Tanya felt hurt because her friend had been _____ and talked behind her back. **LOYAL**
3. He gave her a _____ smile but said he couldn't change the decision. **SYMPATHY**
4. The _____ of the results led to a complete re-evaluation of the project. **ACCURATE**
5. During the crisis, the board praised her _____ behaviour, noting how calmly and efficiently she handled every challenge. **EXAMPLE**

SUBIECTUL al II-lea – READING COMPREHENSION (25 points)

Read the text below and complete the tasks that follow.

1. _____

We all know that being the line leader is an important job, both in a classroom and in a work environment. However, being a line leader may be even more important for swimming birds such as geese and ducks. For a long time, scientists believed that water birds moved in a line to save energy, but they did not fully understand how this worked. We predicted that, when ducklings swim behind their mother, their wave drag is reduced, so we set out to investigate how movement through water affects energy use.

2. _____

When any object moves through a fluid, such as water or air, the fluid pushes back against it. This pushing force is called drag. If you have ever been in a crowded swimming pool, you have experienced wave drag yourself. As people move through the water, they create waves, and when you try to swim through those waves, they push against you, making swimming more difficult. To test our hypothesis, we created a computer program to calculate the wave drag experienced by six ducklings swimming in different positions relative to their mother. Specifically, we measured the wave drag in front of the mother, behind her, and to her side. For the purposes of the experiment, we assumed that the ducklings' size, shape, and feather type were the same and they always swam in line.

3. _____

Our research showed that swimming behind the mother is the best option for ducklings. According to our model, the position in front of the mother involved very high wave drag. As a result, ducklings swimming in front had to work much harder. When swimming to the side, apart from the high water drag, the mother's waves caused the ducklings to rotate, which meant they had to use extra energy just to stay on course. In contrast, swimming behind the mother made movement easier for all the ducklings. In this position, the ducklings were able to "wave ride," meaning they were pushed forward by the waves created by their mother and therefore used less energy to swim.

4. _____

The first two ducklings experienced the strongest wave riding because the mother's waves became smaller the farther they travelled. By the time these waves reached the ducklings farther back, they were no longer strong enough to push them forward directly. However, the ducklings at the front of the line helped pass this wave energy backward, allowing the entire group to benefit. This process, known as wave passing, made it easier for all the ducklings to swim. For both wave riding and wave passing to work effectively, the ducklings must swim at the same speed as their mother and maintain the correct distance from her and from each other. If they fail to do this, they lose the benefits of swimming in a line and must work much harder to move.

5. _____

Understanding wave riding and wave passing in water birds like ducks and geese can also help people. For example, if boats travelled in a line, they could use less energy, which would save money and reduce the damage to the environment. On a smaller scale, people can also reduce wave drag while swimming. When you are in a pool, remember that your movement affects others. By giving swimmers enough space, you prevent your waves from increasing their wave drag and making swimming harder for them. At the same time, leaving space for yourself helps you swim more easily. This way, everyone can enjoy the water without using extra energy.

II.1 Choose the most suitable heading from the list (A-G) for each part (1-5). There are two extra headings which you do not need to use. **10 points**

- A. *The ripple effect*
- B. *Damage caused by boats*
- C. *Prompted by opposing force*
- D. *Weighing the forces at play*
- E. *Swimming in line makes a good leader*
- F. *Intuitive yet unproven*
- G. *From ducks to people*

II.2 For questions 1-5, choose the answer A, B, C, or D which you think fits best according to the text. **15 points**

1. The word 'environment' in paragraph 1

- A. identifies a context/situation where line leading is useful.
- B. refers to an outdoor job.
- C. refers to the physical conditions of a place, such as temperature or weather.
- D. is used again in paragraph 5 with the exact same meaning.

2. The ducklings in the experiment

- A. have been selected according to a specific list of criteria.
- B. are lined in decreasing order, from the biggest to the smallest.
- C. swim in different positions relative to the mother duck at the same time.
- D. are model versions of real ducklings.

3. According to the text, "wave drag" and "wave riding"

- A. both make it easier for ducklings to swim together.
- B. occur when any single object moves through a fluid, such as water or air.
- C. are antagonistic forces.
- D. only occur when ducklings swim in a straight line.

4. According to paragraph 3, which position was the hardest and why?

- A. Swimming in front, because ducklings had to work against wave drag.
- B. Swimming to their mother's side, because they faced both wave drag and being pushed off course by the mother's waves.
- C. Swimming behind the mother, because they had to resist wave riding.
- D. Swimming in line, because the ducklings at the back needed to work extra hard.

5. According to paragraph 4, "wave passing" is

- A. a deliberate effort to help the followers swim at the same distance.
- B. riding a wave in order to pass the other ducklings in the line.
- C. an unintentional but helpful addition to the force created by the mother duck's movement.
- D. passing a wave in order to catch the next one.

SUBIECTUL al III-lea – WRITING

(40 points)

Write a narrative essay ending like this:

She brushed the dust off the back of her coat with a quiet gesture and offered Peter a steady hand to help him up. "It's time to go home!"

Write your story in 150-180 words and give it an appropriate title. Pay attention to the following:

- you don't need to write long descriptions;
- use dialogues only if they are relevant to your characters or events;
- you should use this plan:

1. **Introduction** (paragraph 1 – set the scene)
2. **Main Body** (paragraph(s) 2/3 – develop the story)
3. **Conclusion** (paragraph 4 – end the story)

Do not count the words in the given ending.